

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

Published Weekly by
THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated under the Federal law as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

NOTE TO TEACHERS.—Because so many schools preserve copies of the Geographic News Bulletins, teachers will find the INDEX to VOLUME IV, contained in this issue, of use. The Index covers 30 issues, from March 9, 1925, through the current number, March 1, 1926. The issuance of the Bulletins is a part of the altruistic, educational work of the National Geographic Society. Teachers wishing to give their colleagues the opportunity of using the bulletins, beginning with the new volume, will find a blank for that purpose following Bulletin No. 1.

Contents For Week of March 1, 1926. Vol. IV. No. 30.

1. Asir: Which May Be Swallowed Up.
2. King Cod Gets Some Allies in Newfoundland.
3. Two Englishmen Scale Kilimanjaro, Highest African Peak.
- Index to Bulletins and Illustrations, Vol. IV, March 9, 1925 to March 1, 1926.
4. Night Flying and Night Trains Fostered by Letter Writers.



ARABS CLAIM THEY INVENTED CHESS

(See Bulletin No. 1)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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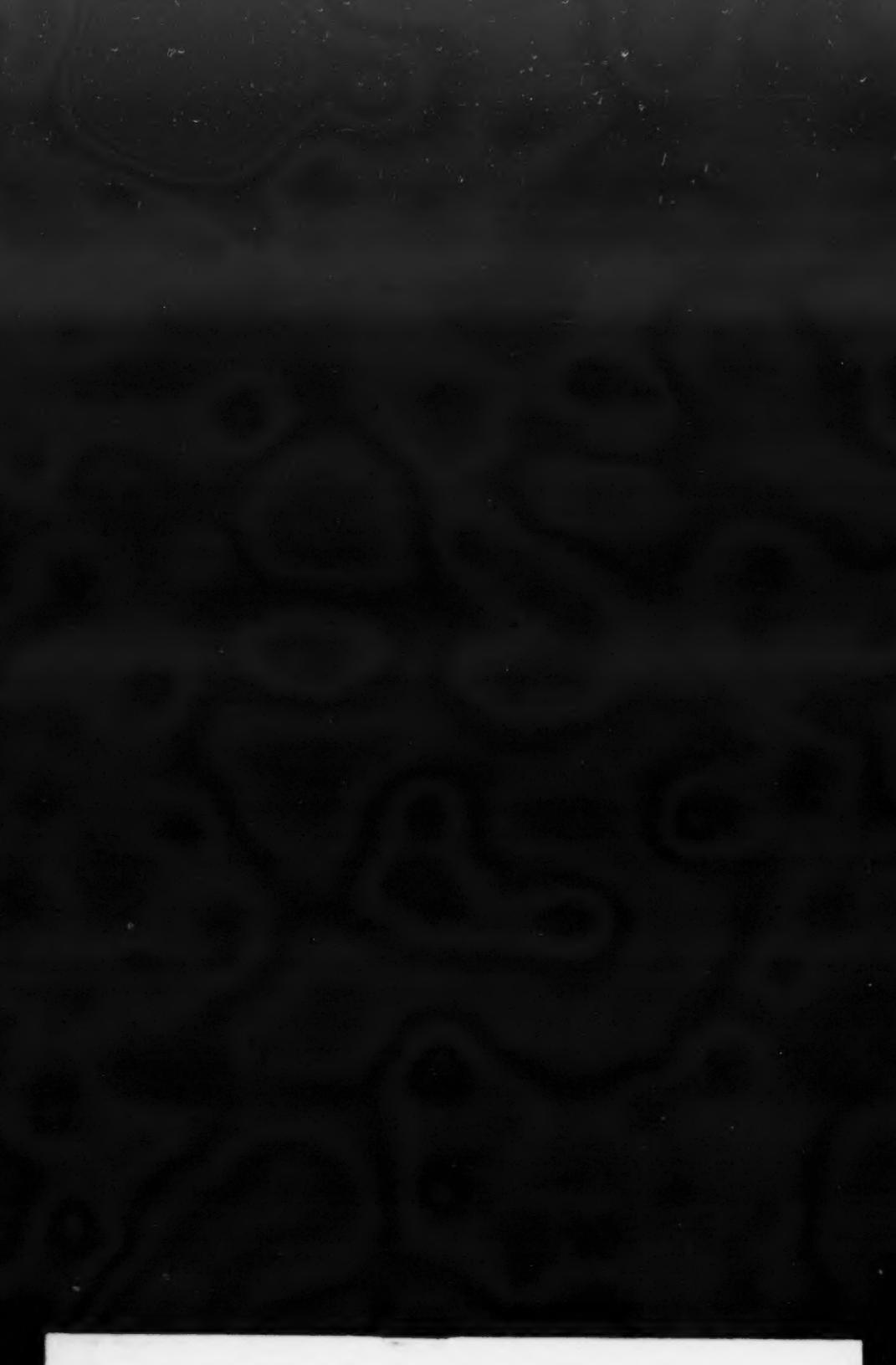


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Asir: Which May Be Swallowed Up

ASIR is caught between the pincers of the two major powers of western Arabia, Hejaz and Yemen. As an independent principality Asir will probably be squeezed out of existence, observers predict.

Great Britain has recognized by treaty the spreading power of Ibn Saud, former ruler of the interior territory of Nejd, who has conquered Mecca, Medina, Jidda and all the rest of Hejaz. (See Bulletin No. 2, February 1, 1926.) This chieftain has also taken a portion of Asir lying to the south. Asir is ruled by Emir Sayyid of the Idrisi tribe. Geography students cannot be held at fault if they do not include the Emir's "home town," Sabiyah, in listing world capitals, because Asir itself is practically unknown.

Asir is on the Arabian shore of the same Red Sea that we are told the children of Israel crossed dry-shod and has existed there with little change probably from the time of that interesting event. Phoenicians and Venetians and Portuguese have coasted alongside its barren, hot sands. Since the Suez Canal was constructed palatial steamers with the last word in equipment and appointments have passed in a continual procession in sight of its coral reefs and beaches and mountains. And yet until 1917 practically nothing whatever was known of the region, and even now the world's knowledge of it is scant.

Turks Ruled But Did Not Explore

As in most other parts of Arabia, the people of Asir are Mohammedans, and fanatical Mohammedans at that. Travelers are not welcome, especially are "Christian dogs" not wanted. But the intolerance of the people of Asir is not reserved for Christians alone. The Turks, who are fellow Moslems and who were in addition representatives of the Caliph, made little headway in Asir. It was a part of the Turkish Empire as was most of the remainder of Arabia; but the people never surrendered their independence. Turkish garrisons held Kanfuda and Jisan, little ports, and Ibl, an inland station; but large districts of Asir's 30,000 or 40,000 square miles of territory were never even explored by the Turks.

Along the Red Sea in Asir is a strip of lowlands 20 to 30 miles wide, known as the "tehama," barren, hot and fever-ridden. In appearance it is not unlike the unlovely Pacific coast of Mexico's Lower California. Even in April the thermometer registers as high as 107° in the shade in the "tehama," and in midsummer it is almost as hot as in America's famous Death Valley.

Even Emir's Rule Not Absolute

The inner edge of the "tehama" is marked by low mountains, some 2,000 feet high. Farther inland are the country's highest peaks, rising to 6,000 and even 8,000 feet. Still farther inland the mountains give way to the high plateau that extends into central Arabia.

In Asir's higher mountains, according to the meager word-of-mouth reports of natives, is a land the direct opposite of the unlovely "tehama." The rainfall in the mountains is said to be considerable and its valleys are regions of running water, trees, gardens, fields and orchards. None of the streams reaches the sea, all being swallowed up by the desert or used up by irrigation.



THE OMAHA FLYING FIELD AT NIGHT

Pilots and planes are changed six times en route between New York and San Francisco; at Cleveland, Omaha, Cheyenne, Salt Lake City, and Reno. The average flight for each pilot is 381 miles. The longest leg is between Omaha and Cheyenne, 176 miles; the shortest is between Reno and San Francisco, 154 miles, where the pilots reach an altitude of from 10,000 to 15,000 feet above sea level while crossing the Sierra Nevada, known in Air Mail parlance as "The Hump" (see Bulletin No. 5).

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King Cod Gets Some Allies in Newfoundland

KING Cod in Newfoundland is gathering an industrial court around him which is bringing prosperity to this easternmost extension of the North American continent. Wood pulp is the most conspicuous figure of the industrial allies of the cod by virtue of the erection of several huge pulp and paper mills. St. John's, the capital, points proudly also to a new grain elevator, a new dry dock and a new \$1,000,000 hotel under construction.

Newfoundland can make out a good case for half of Boston's title, "the home of the bean and the cod." If ever a place owed a debt to fish and that fish, cod, it is this seagirt 42,000 square miles of North America. The word fish means cod to a Newfoundland. All other marine inhabitants take proper names but are scarcely important enough to merit the name fish.

One native was asked if there were any fish in a certain stream. "No," he replied, "nothing but trout."

Cabot Bailed Cod With Baskets

John Cabot, when he touched Newfoundland five years after Columbus landed in the West Indies, reported to the English king that cod were so thick they could be bailed out of the sea with weighted hampers. Even in modern times they are said to have been so numerous dogs would rush into the water and drag them ashore. So thoroughly is Newfoundland reconciled to cod that dogs, cows and bears eat them and when the Newfoundland is not eating cod he consumes vegetables and crops grown on ground *fertilized* with cod.

Cod, however, have this in common with certain other fish; they are sticklers for bait. It is the bait question, chiefly, which gives Newfoundland the reputation of being the cause of many near-wars. Europe's fishermen began sailing to the banks to fish off Newfoundland the year after Cabot planted the flags of England and Venice side by side. Contention over fishing rights raged with little intermission until 1910, when the Hague court decided against a plea of the United States.

Herring, caplin and squid successively serve for cod bait as the season advances. Squid is highly considered as bait but commands such a high price that it is used chiefly in midsummer when the herring and caplin catch falls off. Squid is a member of the cuttlefish family, whose most widely heralded brother is the octopus. When attacked it emits an inky fluid to deceive its pursuers. Newfoundland fishermen find squid chiefly in the fiords of the island's southwest coast.

Caught with Baitless Hook

The squid is one of the few representatives of fresh or salt water fish caught with a baitless hook. "Jigging," natives call the process of wiggling the hook up and down in the water until the squid, victim of its own curiosity, rises to inspect the new toy and gets a prong in one of its ten legs.

For years fishermen of many nations, England, France, Spain and Portugal, sailed to the banks to catch cod and dry it on the shores of Newfoundland. Even before America was discovered cod was a staple in Europe where it was known as stockfish. The apparent value of the new fisheries therefore led

Even the Emir of Asir, nominal lord of the realm, is without authority in much of his wild country. He holds securely only the "tehama," the lower mountains, and a portion of the highest region. In much of the highlands the inhabitants do not acknowledge his authority. This is especially true of the nomads on the edge of the great central desert.

Capital is a Village of Huts

When Italy was at war with Turkey in 1911-12 she gave money to the Emir of Asir who was glad enough to make active his slumbering enmity toward Turkey. During the World War the Emir was one of the numerous Arab chieftains who nominally joined the Allies against the Central Powers. He received supplies from Great Britain but accomplished little, never even dislodging the few Turkish garrisons in Asir.

Sabiyah, the capital of Asir, is in the lower highlands just outside the "tehama." It is described by a British Indian medical officer who visited it during the World War as "a village of huts."

Bulletin No. 1, March 1, 1926.

For Further Reading

Teachers who wish to use this bulletin for project or reading assignment will find allied subject matter and illustrations in the following National Geographic Magazine articles: **Nejd**: "The Rise of the New Arab Nation." By Frederick Simpich. November, 1919, pp. 369-392. **Mecca**: "The Most Extraordinary City in the World." By Shaoching H. Chuan, M.D. October, 1912, 60 illustrations, pp. 959-995. "One Thousand Miles of Railway Built for Pilgrims and not for Dividends." By Colonel F. R. Maunsell. February, 1909, 12 illustrations, pp. 156-172. **Hejaz**: "A Visit to Three Arab Kingdoms." By Junius B. Wood. May, 1923, 30 illustrations, pp. 535-568.

Form for Bulletin Requests

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Two Englishmen Scale Kilimanjaro, Highest African Peak

TWO Englishmen from Cape Town have recently scaled Kilimanjaro Mountain in Tanganyika Territory. The feat of attaining the top-most peak had been accomplished by one other party consisting of two Germans, but the Cape Town men are the first Englishmen to ascend the highest pinnacle of this English-owned volcano. Other climbers have reached the crater.

Although Africa spreads itself to both temperate zones, by whim of geography its only notable snow peaks are under the sun's most direct glare and, of its "high spots" near the Equator, Kilimanjaro is chief.

Kilimanjaro was unknown to the world a century ago, and unscaled until 1889, but now a railway from Mombasa approaches its flanks. In its way it affords Africa claim to one of the greatest mountains on the face of the earth. Everest, at 29,002 altitude, is almost 10,000 feet higher than Kilimanjaro; there are even peaks having similar volcanic origin rising higher in South and Central America, but all of these great ones with the possible exception of Mt. McKinley, rise on the backs of their neighbors. Kilimanjaro stands alone in the heat-scorched, windswept plain. Without even the company of a mountain ridge it rises solitary from a plateau to the snowcapped majesty of 19,819 feet.

Higher than Blanc or Whitney

Europe is proud of its Alps and Pyrenees and the United States considers the Rockies mighty mountains, yet Kilimanjaro is nearly a mile higher than Mt. Whitney, tallest peak in the United States. It is almost 4,000 feet higher than Mt. Blanc, Europe's leading summit. Kilimanjaro has for company on the Equator, Mt. Kenya, just over the Tanganyika border, giving its name to Kenya Colony and "the Mountains of the Moon," (officially Ruwenzori) in Uganda. All feed the White Nile with water for Egypt.

Natives inhabiting the slopes of Kilimanjaro have the legend that the mountain has a silver peak. To tribes who have never seen snow, this seemed the most satisfactory explanation for the gleaming white cap. They associated it with their gods and the first white men to explore it had great difficulty satisfying the natives that they would not drive away Rayli, the god in the form of a giant cow inhabiting the mountain's high plains.

The mountain is a small world in itself, or more properly half a world. The snow cap is its polar cap; the high, cold ridges, without vegetation, are like Labrador or the Alaskan steppe, but instead of harboring reindeer, they support flocks of eland. The mountain is a game preserve so the flocks thrive.

Scotch Highlands of Africa

Next comes a belt of heather similar to that of the Scotch Highlands. Then as the elevation drops, the region of heavy precipitation appears and with it the rain-forest, almost constantly swathed in mist. This jungle thins to the ordinary forest and then dwindles to the mountain's "temperate zone" where the tribesmen live. It is estimated 125,000 people now have their homes on the slopes of Kilimanjaro and they are counted by some explorers among the most intelligent and progressive natives of Africa.

The Chagga and other tribes even employ irrigation to grow their crops of

England to proclaim her right to the island in 1583. Colonization was early planned and on one attempt a company for which Sir Francis Bacon was either press agent or promotion manager, pushed the idea. Bacon's rosy pictures did not insure success. The venture failed partly because the "fishing admirals" who monopolized the business did not wish the island colonized. These daring profiteers are said to have obtained an order to burn houses of fishermen.

English, Irish and Scotch finally did come to the island and their descendants make up the great majority of the 259,000 population.

The Fight For Fishing Rights

The international struggle for fisheries control finally narrowed to England, France and the United States. France once made an effort to capture St. John's, the principal port and capital, and many diplomatic quarrels became heated to the flash-point. Through possession of the tiny islands, St. Pierre and Miquelon, France hoped to hold her trade, but an embargo on bait from Newfoundland and other coastal territory enforced to the letter has nearly wiped the Breton fishing boats off the banks.

Innumerable lakes are the most notable features of inland Newfoundland. One sportsman reports he fished in forty different lakes within a half-mile of one camp. They lie among old rock formations and cover one-third of the entire island. Newfoundland's climate is tempered greatly by the ocean but usually snow is on the ground until late spring and winter clothes are often worn through June. Snow remains on the 2,000-foot ridge, which bears the picturesque name, "Topsails," until August.

Paper For England's Newspapers

Of the exports, which totaled more than \$20,000,000 in a recent year, "hard" or dried cod represented \$13,000,000. This product goes to England, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, the United States and the West Indies. In warm climates it is a food which will not spoil and yet is relatively cheap. Much of the paper for some of England's greatest newspapers comes from Newfoundland where it is manufactured in a plant built by the late Lord Northcliffe. Iron ore, seal and cod oil are other major products.

Contrary to the snap judgment of most Americans neither Newfoundland nor rocky Labrador, are parts of the Dominion of Canada. Despite the fact that most maps color Newfoundland and Canada as if they were one dominion, the first discovered mainland bit of North America is as rigidly independent of the Maple Leaf member of the Commonwealth as Fiji or New Zealand is of Australia.

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INDEX OF GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Covering Vol. 4, March 9, 1925, to March 1, 1926 (inclusive)

CONTINENTS

AFRICA

General: (III.) An Ant Hill in Central Africa. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
(III.) The Official Costume of the Sheik. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
Two Englishmen Scale Kilimanjaro, Highest African Peak. (Mar. 1, 1926)

Ashanti: Ashanti on the Route of Wales Tour. (May 4, 1925.)

Bechuanaland: Bechuanaland, South Africa's "Sahara." (Mar. 9, 1925.)

Carthage: (III.) Tending Sheep among the Lonely Columns of Carthage. (Nov. 30, 1925.)

Egypt: The Sinai Peninsula. (Jan. 4, 1925.)

Jaghbub: Rome and Cairo Delegates Travel Hot Sands to Jaghbub. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

Jubaland: Jubaland: An African Dixie. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
Jubaland: Where Africa's Map Has Changed. (Nov. 2, 1925.)

Kenya Colony: (III.) On a Kenya Colony Coffee Plantation. (Nov. 2, 1925.)

Liberia: Education in Gold with Rubber Into Liberia. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
(III.) An Old Industry in Liberia. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
(III.) Porters in Liberia: Gold Coast Colony Neighbor. (May 4, 1925.)

Morocco: Fez, France's Riff War Capital. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
(Map) French and Spanish Morocco Scene of Riff War. (Oct. 26, 1925.)

Rhodesia: (III.) A Shopping Street in the Heart of Old Fez. (Oct. 26, 1925.)

Suez Canal: (III.) Airplane View of Suez Canal at Kantara. (Jan. 4, 1926.)

Tripoli: Tuareg Women Rule Family and Weave Mats. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
(III.) Tuaregs in Kufra, an Oasis in Interior Tripoli. (Nov. 2, 1925.)

Union of South Africa: (III.) A Mine Cage Descending a South African Gold Mine. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
(III.) Fleet of Native Canoes in Central Africa. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

ASIA

General: The Geography of Asia, Mother of Civilization. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
(III.) Tekke Turkomans and Russians on the Trans-Caspian Railway. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Afghanistan: Afghanistan: Buffer State Between India and Siberia. (Jan. 25, 1926.)
(III.) Costume of an Afghan Woman of the Upper Classes. (Jan. 25, 1926.)

Arabia: An Arabian Coffee Maker With His Utensils. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
(III.) Arabs Claim They Invented Chess. (Mar. 1, 1926.)
(III.) Gathering Salt in Arabian Desert. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
(III.) Milking a Herd of Goats in the Arabian Desert. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
(III.) The Overcoat of an Arabian. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
Wahabists Repeat History in Hejaz. (Mar. 9, 1925.)

Yemen: Which May Have a War on Its Hands. (Feb. 1, 1926.)

Asia Minor: (III.) Preparing Cotton for Weaving, Ginning, Beating and Spinning: Asia Minor. (Apr. 6, 1925.)

Burma: Burma: Land of the Cheroot. (Jan. 25, 1926.)
(III.) With All His Worldly Goods He Her Endows. (Burma) (Jan. 25, 1926.)

Caucasus: (III.) Entrance to Village in the Caucasus. (Apr. 27, 1925.)

China: Bamboo Wares as They are Offered for Sale in Chinese Villages. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
(III.) A Chinese Man in Fantastic Garb, Mounted on Stilts. (Jan. 4, 1925.)
Chinese Revolution, Jamaica, Whose Ginger Trade is Aided by. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
(III.) Hairnets as They Are Shipped. (May 18, 1925.)
Manganeze: First Lieutenant to Steel. (Apr. 27, 1925.)

Georgia: (III.) At Work on a Large Carpet in Anritsak. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

India: (III.) Bath Tub at a King's (India) (May 11, 1925.)
Karachi: From Slave Market to Air Port. (May 11, 1925.)
(III.) Wit Comedy at Lahore. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
(III.) A Rock Tunnel on the Road to Srinagar. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
Tiruvannamallai: A Pilgrim Center in India. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
Vale of Kashmir Greets a New Maharaja. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
(III.) World's Finest Architectural Gem on India's Airways. (May 11, 1925.)
(III.) A Youthful Pilgrim in India, With a Heavy Load. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

Iraq (Mesopotamia): (III.) An Asphalt Spring in Mesopotamia. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
(III.) Gufah—Load of Mesopotamian Watermelons. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
Mosul Boundary Dispute Threatens Ancient Christian Tribe. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
Mosul Dispute, Kurds, Innocent Bystanders in the. (Jan. 11, 1926.)

Japan: (III.) An Amusement of Young Japan: Playing at Being Samurai, Oldtime Military Rulers. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
(III.) Bill-board Advertising in Japan. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
(III.) Delivering Potatoes in Miyagima. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
Fireflies, Crickets and a Japanese Legend. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
(III.) Fujiyama, the Object of Many a Japanese "Vacation." (Feb. 1, 1926.)
(III.) The Making of a Japanese Newspaper: Chinese Boys Picking up Ideographic Types. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Kurdistan: Kurds, Innocent Bystanders in the Mosul Dispute. (Jan. 11, 1925.)
Kurds on Their Regular Warpath. (Apr. 6, 1926.)

Manchuria: Manchuria and Soy Beans. (Jan. 4, 1926.)
The Amur: A Factor in Manchurian Crises. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Nepal: Nepal to Supply Rhinoceros for American Museum. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

Palestine: (III.) At the Well in Haifa, Palestine. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
The Dead Sea, Another Source of Potaah. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

bananas, sweet potatoes and grains. Sometimes they merely divert a mountain stream but frequently more than ordinary engineering skill is used to bring water through tubes or channels considerable distances. The heavy forest belt, not Kilimanjaro's glaciers, supplies most of the irrigation water. Like a vast sponge, the rain-forest drinks up the rain and squeezes it out in springs.

Desert and Snow Limit Native Travel

Below the agricultural belt is the scorched dry plain. It is almost as impossible to get the natives to venture down to the hot plain as to get them to approach the ice-capped crater.

Elephants inhabit the thick forests of Kilimanjaro's slopes. Explorers often see their spurs on banks seemingly impossible for such huge animals to climb. One writer reports seeing marks indicating that the elephants thrust their tusks into the ground to steady themselves on a descent and that scuffed bark showed that they wound their trunks about trees to help themselves up to higher positions.

Bulletin No. 3, March 1, 1926.



FLEET OF NATIVE CANOES IN CENTRAL AFRICA

The logs are hollowed out by fire and primitive tools, cleverly shaped, and scraped down to an inch in thickness. Playful hippopotami and rhinoceroses frequently overturn canoes by rising up under them or lunging at them from the banks. Drainage from the central massif of African mountains affords water for many navigable tributaries of the Upper Nile and Congo Rivers.

NORTH AMERICA

General: (III.) Bringing New York and San Francisco to the Canadian Rockies. (Feb. 22, 1926.) Complete New Link in "Pan-American Railroad." (Nov. 23, 1925.) (III.) Italians Reclaiming Italian Irrigants. (Mar. 1, 1926.) How America Changed Turkistan. (Apr. 13, 1925.) "Old Ironsides" (Constitution). (May 18, 1925.) (III.) A Reproduction of Columbus' Flagship, The "Santa Maria." (May 18, 1925.) (III.) All in the Life of a Boundary Surveyor (Alaska). (Dec. 21, 1925.) (III.) Alaska, Some Vegetable Nuggets From: Middleton Island Potatoes. (Dec. 7, 1925.) (Map.) Map of Mount McKinley National Park. (Jan. 25, 1926.) (III.) Mt. Katmai: Scientists Getting "Smoke" Samples at One of the Ten Thousand. (Nov. 16, 1925.) Mt. McKinley: Scene of Volcanic Activity. (Jan. 25, 1926.) New Alaskan Place Names Adopted. (Nov. 16, 1925.) (III.) Three Scows Full of Salmon for the Cannery at Chignik. (Apr. 13, 1925.) To Map Aleutians Where Airmen Braved Perils. (Apr. 13, 1925.) (III.) All in the Life of a Boundary Surveyor. (Canada-Alaska Boundary.) (Dec. 21, 1925.) Canada Creates World's Coldest Job: Ellesmere Patrol Post. (Nov. 23, 1925.) Fundy, Bay of: Maine Approves Harnessing Bay of Fundy Tides. (Oct. 26, 1925.) Wheat a Magic Staff of Life for Montreal. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Canada: (III.) Cleaning Fish in Quains St. John's, Newfoundland. (Mar. 1, 1926.) King Cod Gets Some Allies in Newfoundland. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

UNITED STATES

General: How Your Newspaper is Made. (Apr. 13, 1925.) Night Flying and Night Training Fostered by Letter Writers. (Mar. 1, 1926.) Our Misplaced Boundary Lines. (Dec. 21, 1925.) United States Fleet to Visit Australia's "Little Sister." (Tasmania). (May 4, 1925.) (III.) Avalon Harbor: Santa Catalina Islands, California. (Mar. 30, 1925.) California's Enchanted Isles in a New Role. (Mar. 30, 1925.) How Los Angeles Goes East for Water. (Apr. 27, 1925.) Santa Barbara: The Mantle of America. (Feb. 1, 1926.) (III.) Tevis Bamboo Grove of Bakersfield, California. (Jan. 18, 1926.) (III.) Tower Telescope Used at Mt. Wilson to Study the Sun. (Apr. 27, 1925.) (III.) View of Section of an Inverted Siphon on the Owens Valley Project. (Apr. 27, 1925.)

District of Columbia: (III.) Sight-seers Testing the Peculiar Acoustic Properties of the "Whispering Gallery" of Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol. (Nov. 2, 1925.)

Illinois: How Many Times is Your State Represented in Washington (D. C.)? (Nov. 2, 1925.) (III.) Bushels of Wheat Going Up in a Chicago Elevator Fire. (Apr. 20, 1925.) (III.) Inspecting Chicago's Freight Tunnels. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Immigrants: (III.) A Future American at Ellis Island. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

Insular Possessions: Palmas, the Island Uncle Sam Forgot. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

Maine: Maine Approves Harnessing Bay of Fundy Tides. (Oct. 26, 1925.)

National Monuments: (Katmai); New Alaskan Place Names Adopted. (Nov. 16, 1925.) (III.) Mt. Katmai: Scientists Getting "Smoke" Samples at One of the Ten Thousand. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

Nebraska: (III.) The Omaha Flying Field at Night. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

New Mexico: (III.) A "Bucket Brigade" at Pueblo Bonito. (Mar. 30, 1925.) Geologist Sees 1877 Prophecy Come True at Pueblo Bonito. (Dec. 14, 1925.) (III.) Pueblo Bonito As It Stands Today.

Pennsylvania: (III.) Petting Tree Stump in the Coal and Bituminous Mine; Scranton, Pennsylvania. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Utah: (III.) Looking Through the Arch of the Largest Natural Bridge in the World. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

Virginia: (III.) Arlington Radio Towers: The Timepiece of the World. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

Wisconsin: (III.) An Astronomer Going From His Work at Yerkes Observatory. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

CENTRAL AMERICA

General: Complete New Link in "Pan-American Railroad." (Nov. 23, 1925.)

Guatemala: Guatamala; Which Coffee has Made Commercially Important. (Feb. 8, 1926.) (III.) Type of Guatamala Forest. (Feb. 8, 1926.)

Mexico: (III.) Cacao, or Chocolate, Growing in Tabasco, Mexico. (Nov. 23, 1925.) Chihuahua (Mexico): A Rich Neighbor. (Mar. 23, 1925.) Durango City (Mexico) Makes Ice with Leaves. (May 4, 1925.) Guadalajara: See It Only to Mexico City. (Feb. 15, 1926.) (III.) Leaves Used for Making Ice in Mexico. (Mar. 4, 1925.) (III.) Mexican Girl Making Tortillas. (Dec. 21, 1925.) Nayarit: An Mexican State's Rich Resources. (Feb. 8, 1926.) (III.) On a Chihuahua (Mexico) Cattle Ranch. (Mar. 23, 1925.) (III.) "Playing the Bear" in Guadalajara (Mexico). (Feb. 15, 1926.) Rubber Comes to Tabasco. (Nov. 23, 1925.) (III.) Panama Hats That Will Never See Panama. (Dec. 14, 1925.)

SOUTH AMERICA

General: Complete New Link in "Pan-American Railroad." (Nov. 23, 1925.) South America: Continent of Untapped Resources. (Jan. 8, 1926.)

Bolivia: (III.) Weapons of Civilization and Savagery (South American Indians with guns.) (Jan. 18, 1926.) (III.) Stock Cannot Ride on a Lake Titicaca Reed Boat. (Nov. 23, 1925.)

Chile: (III.) A Beast of Burden in Tarapaca. (Mar. 10, 1925.) (III.) Fruit Vending on Donkey Back (Chile). (Mar. 23, 1925.) Chile's Intricate Government Machinery. (Mar. 23, 1925.) Tacna-Arica, A Drug Store Counter. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

Colombia: Colombia: Brought Nearer to the World by Seaplane. (Apr. 20, 1925.) (III.) One Way of Crossing the Andes in Colombia. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Peru: (III.) Stock Cannot Ride on a Lake Titicaca Reed Boat. (Nov. 23, 1925.) Tacna-Arica, A Drug Store Counter. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

POLAR REGIONS

General: Lenin Land (Nikolas Second Island), A Renamed Russian Island. (May 18, 1925.) (III.) All in the Life of a Boundary Surveyor. (Alaska-Canada Boundary.) (Dec. 21, 1925.) (III.) Eskimo Girl Gathering Flowers at Foulike Fiord, 700 Miles from the North Pole. (Jan. 4, 1925.) How Eskimos Hunt the Walrus. (Jan. 4, 1925.) The MacMillan Arctic Expedition under the Auspices of the National Geographic Society. (May 4, 1925.) MacMillan Expedition Corrects Readings of Scientifics. (Oct. 19, 1925.) (III.) Midwinter Sailing Into the Home of the Icebergs. (Feb. 22, 1926.) Icebergs Are the Prize of a War of Sea Currents. (Feb. 22, 1926.) MacMillan's Route and Program. (May 18, 1925.) (Map.) A Sketch Map of the Northern Hemisphere Showing Proposed Routes of Aircraft Over the Arctic Zone. (May 4, 1925.) (III.) A Polar Bear Held at Bay by the Dogs Until Their Masters Arrive. (May 18, 1925.)

Haifa: Progressive Port of Palestine. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
 (III.) The Supposed Point of the Crossing of the Jordan by the Children of Israel. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
 (III.) Wailing Place of the Jews: Jerusalem. (Apr. 27, 1925.)

Asir: Which May Be Swallowed Up. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

Persia: The Greatest Seasonal Migration of Modern Times (Bakhtiaris). (Jan. 11, 1926.)

Russia: A Persian Mohammedan Praying. (Jan. 11, 1926.)

Siam: Cutting a Road Through the Caucasus in Winter. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 Bangkok: Scene of a Royal Drama. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 (III.) Late King of Siam Seated on Golden Palanquin Used in the Coronation Ceremony (Dec. 21, 1925.)

Siberia: Interior of a Rich Yakut's House. (May 18, 1925.)
 Irkutsk: Important Station on a New Air Route. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
 (III.) A Siberian Reindeer With a Two-Days-Old Calf. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
 (III.) War Time "Pulmans" Deluxe on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Syria: Baalbek: An Ancient Gem Amidst Modern Conflict. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 Beersheba's Municipal Guest Book in Syria. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
 Beirut: Where the West Overlaps the Near East. (Jan. 4, 1925.)
 The Druzes, Challengers of France in Syria. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
 (III.) Great Portal into the Temple of Bacchus, Baalbek. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 (III.) How the Druzes Came to the Land of Northern Syria. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
 (III.) Nature's Cantines (melons) for Sale in Damascena. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
 Syria: The Hub of Three Continents. (Nov. 30, 1925.)

Tibet: Lhasa: Where Electricity May Displace Butter. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
 (III.) The Palace of the Dalai Lama at Lhasa. (Feb. 15, 1926.)
 (III.) The Potala, Chief Palace at Lhasa. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
 Tibet: Where the Reining Buddhas Are at Ours. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

Turkestan: How America Changed Turkestan. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Turkey: History by Hats in Turkey. (Feb. 8, 1926.)
 (III.) Two Types of Headgear of Old Turkey. (Feb. 8, 1926.)

AUSTRALIA

Australia: Adelaide: Proposed Terminal of a Great Railroad. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 (III.) Eucalyptus Log from Tasmania. (May 4, 1925.)
 (III.) Getting a Free Ride on the Australian Desert. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 (III.) Martin Place, in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
 Sydney: Australia's Metropolis. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
 United States Fleet to Visit Australia's "Little Sister." (Tasmania.) (May 4, 1925.)
 (III.) Wool Shed in Port Adelaide, Australia. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

EUROPE

General: The Outstanding Geographic Facts of Europe. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 (Map) • The Geographic Facts of Europe as Shown by a Physical Map. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

Bulgaria: A Bulgarian Farm Scene: At the Well. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) A Bulgarian Woman Spinning as She Walks. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 The Greek-Bulgarian Border Where a War Was Stopped. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) Native Bread Drying in a Village Street, Bulgaria. (May 11, 1925.)
 Varna (Bulgaria) Scene of Revolt. (May 11, 1925.)
 (III.) Market Day in Zagreb, Croatia. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

Daghestan: Daghestan: Where the Present is Medieval. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

England: The Famous Chalk Cliffs on England's Side of the Channel. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 (III.) The Herring Auction in Grimsby, England. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 How Geography Gives the English Channel a Bad Reputation. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 Hull (England): A City That Has Lost Its Name. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 Newcastle: Coal Town Since 1200. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
 Nottingham Rises to Robin Hood's Defense. (May 11, 1925.)
 (III.) Breton Women Threshing Grain with Jointed Flails. (Apr. 27, 1925.)

France: Douarnenez: Port of Fish and Independence. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
 (III.) Looking Into the Hall of Mirrors From the Hall of War at Versailles. (Nov. 16, 1925.)
 Nice: Capital of the Riviera. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) The Curving Beaches of Nice. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 Cologne: Its Famous Cathedral. (Feb. 8, 1926.)
 (III.) Cologne from the Air. (Feb. 8, 1926.)
 Frankfurt: Another Center of Jewish Interest. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
 Leipzig Has "World's Fair" Every Year. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 Ruhr Cities of Germany's "Pittsburgh District." (Feb. 15, 1926.)
 (Map.) A Sketch Map of the Ruhr Basin. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

Greece: Athos: At Last Invaded by Women. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
 The Greek-Bulgarian Border Where a War Was Stopped. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) Master of the Kitchen in Man's Domain, Mt. Athos, Greece. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
 (III.) Past and Present in Saloniki, Greece. (Nov. 16, 1925.)
 Saloniki: New "Free Zone for the Balkans." (Nov. 16, 1925.)
 (III.) Sea Washing into the Main Street of Saloniki. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

Ireland: Ireland's Two States. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
 City Planning Program Ordered for Rome. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
 (III.) The Eternal City (Rome) from the Dome of St. Peter's. (Feb. 1, 1926.)

Italy: Italian Rule in Italian Trentino Disturbs Germany. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 (III.) The Milk Wagon of Naples. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 Naples Goes Over a Million. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 San Marino: Whose Children Choose Its Rulers. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
 (III.) Troop Transport in the Dolomite Alps. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Netherlands: Surinam Linked to Holland by Air. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
Rumania: Bucharest: The Brooklyn of the Balkans. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 (III.) Roman Church in Bucharest. (Mar. 23, 1925.)

Russia: Cutting a Road Through the Caucasus in Winter. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 (III.) Fishing Boat in an Open Harbor on the Murman Coast. (Feb. 15, 1926.)
 (III.) Hides at the Nizhni-Novgorod Market. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 Lenin Land, a Renamed Russian Island. (May 18, 1925.)
 (III.) Loading Wheat for Export at Odessa, Russia. (Jan. 25, 1926.)
 Odessa Again Becoming Great Russian Port. (Jan. 25, 1926.)
 (III.) A Russian Church in Bucharest. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 The Unfreezing Murman Coast. (Feb. 15, 1926.)
 (III.) A Zirinian and His Fleet-Pooped Four-in-Hand on the Murman Coast. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

San Marino: San Marino: Whose Children Choose Its Rulers. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Spain: A Mantilla in the Making: Granada. (May 11, 1925.)

Sweden: Broadcasting Stockholm. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 Gothenburg Shows Sweden's Wares. (May 11, 1925.)
 (III.) Weaving in a Swedish Home. (May 11, 1925.)

Switzerland: Where the "Facts of Locarno" Were Born. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

Oil: (III.) An Oil Well in Full Action. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
Palm Oil: (III.) An Old Industry (palm oil) in Liberia. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
Paper: How Your Newspaper is Made. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
 (III.) The Making of a Japanese Newspaper: Chinese Boys Picking up Ideographic Types. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Paraffine: Paraffine: A Mineral Product of Many Uses. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
Pearl Fisheries: (Pearl Fisheries): Pearls, The Tombs of Worms. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
Potash: The Dead Sea: Another Source of Potash. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
Potatoes: (III.) Delivering Potatoes in Miyagima (Japan). (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 (III.) Some Vegetable Nuggets from Alaska: Middleton Island Potatoes. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
Resources: Story of a Successful Vegetable, the Potato. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
Rubber: South America: Countries of Unexplored Resources. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 Education to go With Rubber Into Liberia. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
 Rubber Come to Tabasco. (Nov. 23, 1925.)

Rugs: The Rubbers of Jungle, Orchard and Meadow. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
Salt: How America Changed Turkestan. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
Seaweed: (III.) Gathering Salt in Arabian Desert. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
Weaving: (III.) A Tidal Product (Seaweed). (Oct. 26, 1925.)
 Tuareg Women Rule Family and Weave Mats. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
 (III.) Weaving in a Swedish Home. (May 11, 1925.)
Wheat: (III.) Bushels of Wheat Going Up in a Chicago Elevator Fire. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
Wool: Wheat a Magic Staff of Life for Montreal. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
 (III.) Wool Shed in Port Adelaide, Australia. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

GEOGRAPHY, ANTHROPOLOGY, SPORTS AND GAMES

Boundaries: (III.) All in the Life of a Boundary Surveyor (Alaska-Canada Boundary). (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 Mosul Boundary Dispute Threatens Ancient Christian Tribe. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
 Our Misplaced Boundary Line (United States). (Dec. 21, 1925.)

Cliffs: The Famous Chalk Cliffs on Europe's Side of the Channel. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
Geography: (III.) An Ally of Geography Militant (Ship). (Apr. 6, 1925.)
 Exploring the World We Live In. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
 (III.) Old Glory Figures in a Philippine Dancing Ceremony (Flags). (Mar. 30, 1925.)
 The Geography of Asia, Mother of Civilization. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
 How Geography Gives the English Channel a Bad Reputation. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 The Outstanding Geographic Facts of Europe. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 The Romance of a Unique Society (National Geographic Society). (Mar. 30, 1925.)
Hunting: (III.) Eskimo Woman Starting for Auke With a Net Near Ellesmere Island. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 How Eskimos Hunt the Walrus. (Jan. 4, 1925.)

Manners and Customs: (III.) An Amusement of Young Japan: Playing at Being Samurai, Old-time Military Rulers. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
 (III.) Bath Tub of a King (India). (May 11, 1925.)
 (III.) Bathsheba's Municipal Guest Book in Syria. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
 Bill-board Advertising in Japan. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
 (III.) Breton Women Threshing Grain With Jointed Flails. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
 (III.) A Bulgarian Woman Spinning as She Walks. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) A Corn-on-the-Cob Feast in Rhodesia. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 (III.) Delivering Potatoes in Miyagima (Japan). (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 Durango City Makes Ice With Leaves. (May 4, 1925.)
 (III.) The Eskimo Eats Most of His Food Raw. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
 (III.) Eskimo Girl Gathering Flowers in Pukie Fiori, 700 Miles from The North Pole. (Jan. 4, 1926.)
 (III.) Eskimo Woman Starting for Auke With a Net Near Ellesmere Island. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 "Fads" Are Dramas on a World Stage. (May 18, 1925.)
 (III.) Food Vending from Double Back (Sale). (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 (III.) Going to Market in Jamaica. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
 The Greatest Seasonal Migration of Modern Times (Balchitarris). (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) Hides at the Nizhni-Novgorod Market. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 How the World Takes Its Vacations. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
 (III.) Interior of a Rich Yakut's House. (May 18, 1925.)
 (III.) Late King of Siam Seated on Golden Palanquin Used in the Coronation Ceremony. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 (III.) Leaves Used for Making Ice in Mexico. (May 4, 1925.)
 Leipzig Has "World's Fair" Every Year. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
 (III.) A Lofty Clubhouse in the Island of Yap. (Jan. 8, 1926.)
 (III.) The Making of a Japanese Newspaper: Chinese Boys Picking up Ideographic Types. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
 (III.) Market Day in Zagreb, Croatia. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
 (III.) Mexican Girl Making Tortillas. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
 (III.) The Milk Wagon of Naples. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 (III.) Milking a Herd of Goats in the Arabian Desert. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 (III.) Native Bread Drying in a Village Street, Bulgaria. (May 11, 1925.)
 (III.) The Official Costume of the Sheikh. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 (III.) Old Glory Figures in a Philippine Dancing Ceremony. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
 (III.) "Old" Playing the Bass in Grade-A Beer. (Feb. 15, 1926.)
 (III.) Porters in Liberia, Gold Coast Colony Neighbor. (May 4, 1925.)
 (III.) Two Little Piggy Go to Market in Sumatra. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 Vale of Kashmir Grows a New Mahogany. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
 (III.) Weapons of Civilization and Savagery (blow-guns and rifles). (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 (III.) Weaving in a Swedish Home. (May 11, 1925.)
 (III.) With All His Worldly Goods He Her Endows (Burma). (Jan. 25, 1926.)
 (III.) A Youthful Pilgrim (India) With a Heavy Load. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 (Map) French and Spanish Morocco Scene of Riff War. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
 (Map) The Geographic Facts of Europe as Shown by a Physical Map. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
 (Map) Sketch Map of the Northern Hemisphere Showing Proposed Routes of Aircraft Over the Arctic Zone. (May 4, 1925.)

Maps: To Map Aleutians Where Airmen Braved Perils. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
 (III.) Source of the Panacea for Leprosy. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
Medicines: Tacna-Arica, A Drug Store Counter. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

Names, Geographical: Cities and Places That Are Nouns and Verbs. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Hull: (England): A City That Has Lost Its Name. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 New Alaskan Place Names Adopted. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

Ocean: Fashion in Colors for Oceans. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
 Icebergs Are the Prize of a War of Sea Currents. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 (III.) Midnight Sailing Into the Home of the Icebergs. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 (III.) Starfish and Crayfish in Gear Ocean Water. (Apr. 6, 1925.)

Pirates: Galapagos Has Tents of Natural Rubber Pirates. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
 (III.) Peaceful Fields Never Smile in Pirate Raunts of the Spanish Main. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 Pirates and Pirate Haunts. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

Races: (Ashanti) Ashanti on the Route of Wales' Tour. (May 4, 1925.)
 (Bakhtiaris) Greatest Seasonal Migration of Modern Times. (Jan. 11, 1926.)

Ellesmere Island: Ellesmere Island: Canada Creates World's Coldest Job: Ellesmere Patrol Post. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
(III.) Eskimo Woman Starting for Auks With a Net Near Ellesmere Island. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
Greenland: The Head of a Bull Walrus Killed at Etah, Greenland. (Jan. 4, 1926.)
MacMillan's Route and Program. (May 18, 1925.)

ISLANDS

Ascension: A Quarter-Deck Island. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
Barbados: (III.) Peaceful Fields Now Smile in Pirate Haunts of the Spanish Main. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
Bouvet Island: Bouvet: Loneliest Island in the World. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
Canaries: Canaries Are Named for a Dog. (Nov. 16, 1925.)
Cape Verde Islands: Inevitable Airplane Station. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
Corsica: (III.) Piles of Cork-oak Bark Neatly Trimmed, Ready for Baling: Corsica. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
Banditry and Other Paradoxes of Corsica. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
Easter Island: (III.) Images on Mysterious Easter Island. (Mar. 16, 1925.)
Ellesmere: Canada Creates World's Coldest Job: Ellesmere Patrol Post. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
(III.) Eskimo Woman Starting for Auks With a Net Near Ellesmere Island. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
MacMillan's Route and Program. (May 18, 1925.)
Ellis Island: (III.) A Future American at Ellis Island. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
Galapagos: Galapagos Has Treasures of Nature and Pirates. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
Hawaiian Group: Hawaii: America's Pacific Outpost. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
Hebrides: Hebrides: Scotland's Bleak Western Isles Which Fear Effects of Modern Innovations. (Jan. 4, 1925.)
Jamaica: (III.) Jamaica: Whisky Ginger Trade is Aided by Chinese Revolution. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Jerba: Jerba: New Center of Undersea Archaeology. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
Lenin Land: Lenin Land, a Renamed Russian Island. (May 18, 1925.)
Madagascar: Madagascar: The "Little Continent." (Nov. 9, 1925.)
Middleton Island: (III.) Some Vegetable Nuggets From Alaska: Middleton Island Potatoes. (Dec. 7, 1925.)
Philippine Islands: (III.) Old Glory Figures in a Philippine Dancing Ceremony. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
Palmas, the Island Uncle Sam Forgot. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
Porto Rico: (III.) Panama Hats (Porto Rico) That Will Never See Panama. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Samoa: American Samoa Asks Food From U. S. After Storm. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
Santa Barbara: California's Enchanted Isles in a New Role. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
Santa Catalina: (III.) Avalon Harbor: Santa Catalina Island, California. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
California's Enchanted Isles in a New Role. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
Santa Cruz: California's Enchanted Isles in a New Role. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
South Sea Islands: (III.) The Favorite Mode of Communication in the South Seas. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
Sumatra: Sumatra, Linked to Holland by Air. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
(III.) Two Little Pigs go to Market in Sumatra. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
Tahiti: (III.) Tahitian With a Load of "Fei," A Staple Article of Diet. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
United States Fleet Visits Tahiti, Port of South Sea Charm. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
Trinidad: Asphalt and Its Trinidad Home. (May 4, 1925.)
(III.) A Caribbean Contribution to the Streets and Highways of the United States. (May 4, 1925.)
Virgin Islands: (III.) Blackbeard's Castle Above St. Thomas. (Jan. 25, 1926.)
The Virgin Islands: Our \$25,000,000 Triplets. (Jan. 25, 1926.)
Yap: (III.) A Lofty Clubhouse in the Island of Yap. (Jan. 8, 1926.)
Tidal Wave Sweeps Yap, Island of Millstone Money. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Aluminum: Aluminum: A Young Metal of Increasing Usefulness. (Feb. 8, 1926.)
Asphalt: Asphalt and Its Trinidad Home. (May 4, 1925.)
(III.) An Asphalt Spring in Mesopotamia. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
(III.) A Caribbean Contribution to the Streets and Highways of the United States. (May 4, 1925.)
Bamboo: Bamboo: Grass That Is Timber and Food. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
(III.) Bamboo Wares As They Are Offered for Sale in Chinese Villages. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
(III.) The Tevis Bamboo Grove of Chaulmooga, California. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
Beans: Manchuria and Soy Beans. (Jan. 4, 1926.)
Bread: (III.) Mexican Girl Making Tortillas. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
(III.) Native Bread Drying in a Village Street, Bulgaria. (May 11, 1925.)
Cacao: (III.) Cacao, or Chocolate, Growing in Tabasco, Mexico. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
Cattle: (III.) On a Chihuahua Cattle Ranch. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
Chaulmooga Oil: (III.) Source of the Panacea for Leprosy (Chaulmooga Tree.) (Apr. 6, 1925.)
Coal: Newcastle (England): Coal Town Since 1200. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
(III.) Petrified Tree Stump in the Cork and Bottle Mine: Scranton, Pennsylvania. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
Coffee: An Arabian Coffee Maker With His Utensils. (Feb. 1, 1926.)
(III.) On a Kenya Colony Coffee Plantation. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
Copper: Casting Molten Copper. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
Cork: (III.) Piles of Cork-oak Bark Neatly Trimmed, Ready for Baling: Corsica. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
Corn: (III.) A Champion Boy Corn Grower. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
Corn, Another Popular Export From the Americas. (Dec. 21, 1925.)
Cotton: (III.) A Corn-on-the-Cob Farm in Rhodesia. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
(III.) Processing Cotton for Weaving, Ginning, Boiling and Spinning: Asia Minor. (Apr. 6, 1925.)
Fei: (III.) Tahitian With a Load of "Fei," A Staple Article of Diet. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
Fisheries: Douarnenez: Port of Fish and Independence. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
(III.) Cleaning Fish in Quaint St. John's, Newfoundland. (Mar. 1, 1926.)
(III.) Fishing Boat in a Quiet Harbor on the Murman Coast. (Feb. 15, 1926.)
King Cod Gets Some Allies in Newfoundland. (Mar. 1, 1926.)
(III.) Three Scows Full of Salmon for the Cannery at Chignik. (Apr. 13, 1925.)
(III.) The Herring Auction in Grimbsy, England. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
Foods: Feasting One's Way Around the World. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
(III.) Going to Market in Jamaica. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Fruit: (III.) Fruit Vending from Donkey Back (Chile). (Mar. 23, 1925.)
(III.) Pineapple Plantation on the Island of Oahu (Hawaiian Islands). (Oct. 19, 1925.)
Ginger: Jamaica: Whose Ginger Trade is Aided by Chinese Revolution. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Gold: (III.) A Mine Cage Descending a South African Gold Mine. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
Grain: (III.) Breton Women Threshing Grain With Jointed Flails. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
Hairnets: (III.) Hairnets As They Are Shipped. (May 18, 1925.)
Hats: History by Hats in Turkey. (Feb. 8, 1926.)
(III.) Panama Hats That Will Never See Panama. (Dec. 14, 1925.)
Hides: Hides at the Nizhni-Novgorod Market. (Mar. 23, 1925.)
Ice: Durango City Makes Ice With Leaves. (May 4, 1925.)
(III.) Leaves Used for Making Ice in Mexico. (May 4, 1925.)
Lace-making: (III.) A Mantilla in the Making. Granada. (May 11, 1925.)
Lumber: (III.) A Eucalyptus Log from Tasmania. (May 4, 1925.)
Manganese: Manganese: First Lieutenant to Steel. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
Melons: (III.) A Gufah-Load of Mesopotamian Watermelons. (Oct. 26, 1925.)
(III.) Nature's Canteens (Melons) for Sale at Damascus. (Nov. 30, 1925.)
Metals: The War of Precious Metals. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
Milk: (III.) The Milk Wagon of Naples. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

Sumatra Linked to Holland by Air. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 To Map Aleutians Where Airmen Braved Perils. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Astronomy: (III.) An Astronomer Going From His Work at Yerkes Observatory. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 (III.) Tower Telescope Used at Mt. Wilson to Study the Sun. (Apr. 27, 1925.)

Chemistry: The Ocean Incorporated into the Breweries Business. (Jan. 11, 1926.)

Engineering: (III.) Troop Transport in the Dolomite Alps. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Explosions: (III.) Bushels of Wheat Going Up in a Chicago Elevator Fire. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Geology: Geologist Says 1877 Prophecy Come True at Pueblo Bonito. (Dec. 14, 1925.)

Mines: (III.) Mine Cage Descending a South African Gold Mine. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

National Geographic Society Expeditions: (III.) "Bucket Brigade" at Pueblo Bonito. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
 Expedition to Study Sun as Weather Dictator. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 The MacMillan Arctic Expedition Under the Auspices of the National Geographic Society. (May 4, 1925.)

MacMillan Expedition Collects Rare Arctic Specimens. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
 MacMillan's Route and Program. (May 18, 1925.)

(III.) Midnight Sailing Into the Home of the Icebergs. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

New Alaskan Place Names Adopted. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

(III.) Pueblo Bonito as It Stands Today. (Dec. 14, 1925.)

The Romance of a Unique Society (National Geographic Society). (Mar. 30, 1925.)

Numismatics: Millstone Money, Tidal Wave Sweeps Yap, Island of. (Jan. 18, 1926.)
 (Platinum Coins) The War of Precious Metals. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

Radio: (III.) Arlington Radio Towers: The Timepiece of the World. (Nov. 16, 1925.)
 (III.) Bringing New York and San Francisco to the Canadian Rockies. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 Around the World With Radio. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 The Radio Gates of Great Cities. (Nov. 16, 1925.)
 Broadcasting Stockholm. (Dec. 21, 1925.)

Railroads: Adelaide: Proposed Terminal of Great Railroad. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 Complete New Line in "Pan-American Railroad." (Nov. 23, 1925.)

(III.) Tekke Turkomans and Russians on the Trans-Caspian Railway. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Sun: (III.) Expedition to Study Sun as Weather Dictator. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

Transportation: (III.) Fleet of Native Canoes in Central Africa. (Mar. 1, 1926.)
 (III.) Getting a Free Ride on the Australian Desert (Camels). (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 Night Flying and Night Trains Fostered by Letter Writers. (Mar. 1, 1926.)
 One Way of Crossing the Andes in Colombia. (Apr. 20, 1925.)
 (III.) Troop Transportation in the Dolomite Alps. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 (III.) War-Time "Pullmans" Deluxe on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. (Feb. 22, 1926.)
 (III.) Inspecting Chicago's Freight Tunnels. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Tunnels: Sub-land Travel, Old and New. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Volcanoes: (III.) Mt. Katmai: Scientists Getting "Smoke" Samples at One of the Ten Thousand. (Nov. 16, 1925.)
 Mt. McKinley: Scene of Volcanic Activity. (Jan. 25, 1926.)

Water Supply: How Los Angeles Goes East for Water. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
 (III.) View of Section of an Inverted Siphon on the Owens Valley Project. (Apr. 27, 1925.)



CLEANING FISH IN QUAINT ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND

Many men spend practically their entire lives as fish cleaners. Even in so humble a trade rivalries crop out, and there are a number of claimants for the international championship in fish dressing (see Bulletin No. 2).

(III.) A Bulgarian Woman Spinning as She Walks. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 (III.) (Eskimo Children) Me-oish-oo and Shoo-e-oing-wa Take a Sun Bath with Their Puppies on Father's Big Bearskin Rug. (Oct. 19, 1925.)
 (III.) Eskimo Woman Starting for Auks With a Net Near Ellesmere Island. (Nov. 23, 1925.)
 (III.) An Indian (Mexico) Girl With a Broom. (Feb. 8, 1926.)
 (Indians, South American). (III.) Weapons of Civilization and Savagery (blow-guns and rifles). (Jan. 18, 1926.)

(Irish Child) (III.) A Future American at Ellis Island. (Mar. 30, 1925.)
 (Jews) Frankfurt (Germany): Another Center of Jewish Interest. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
 (Jews) (III.) The Wailing Place of the Jews: Jerusalem. (Apr. 27, 1925.)
 Kurds: Innocent Bystanders in the Mosul Dispute. (Jan. 11, 1926.)
 Kurds on Their Regular Warpath. (Apr. 6, 1925.)

(III.) Tahitian With a Load of "Fei," a Staple Article of Diet. (Nov. 9, 1925.)
 Tuareg Women Rule Family and Weave Mats. (Nov. 2, 1925.)

(III.) Tuaregs in Kufra, an Oasis in Interior Tripoli. (Nov. 2, 1925.)
 (III.) Tekke Turkomans and Russians on the Trans-Caspian Railway. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Wahabis Repeat History in Hedjaz. (Mar. 9, 1925.)
 (Yakut.) (III.) Interior of a Rich Yakut's House. (May 18, 1925.)

(III.) A Zirinian and His Fleet-Footed Four-in-Hand on the Murman Coast. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

Christian Tribe: Mosul Boundary Threatens Ancient. (Oct. 26, 1925.)

(III.) Mohammedan Praying, A Persian. (Jan. 11, 1926.)

(Lamaism) Lhasa: Where Electricity May Displace Butter. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

(III.) The Palace of the Dalai Lama. (Feb. 1, 1926.)

(III.) The Potala, Chief Palace at Lhasa. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

Tibet: Where the Reining Buddhas Are at Outa. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

Tiruvannamalai: A Pilgrim Center in India. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

(III.) A Youthful Pilgrim With a Heavy Load. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

(III.) An Ally of Geography Militant (Ship). (Apr. 6, 1925.)

"Old Ironsides" (Ship). (May 18, 1925.)

(III.) A Reproduction of Columbus' Flagship, the "Santa Maria." (May 18, 1925.)

(III.) Arabs Claim They Invented Chess. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

Sports: Tennis Has a Royal Past. (May 11, 1925.)

(III.) This Game Was Played by Louis X (Tennis). (May 11, 1925.)

Sports: How the World Takes Its Vacations. (Feb. 1, 1926.)

NATURE STUDY

Animals: (Bears) (III.) A Polar Bear Held at Bay by the Dogs Until Their Masters Arrive. (May 18, 1925.)

(Camels) (III.) Getting a Free Ride on the Australian Desert. (Nov. 9, 1925.)

(Dogs) (III.) Bush: The Tradition, Mammal, Listening In. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

(Dogs) Canaries Are Named for a Dog. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

(Dogs) (III.) A Polar Bear Held at Bay by the Dogs Until Their Masters Arrive. (May 18, 1925.)

(Goats) (III.) Milking a Herd of Goats in the Arabian Desert. (Mar. 9, 1925.)

(Llama) (III.) A Beast of Burden in Tacna. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

(Pigs) (III.) Two Little Pigs go to Market in Sumatra. (Mar. 9, 1925.)

(Reindeer) (III.) A Siberian Reindeer With a Two-Days-Old Calf. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

(Reindeer) A Zirinian and His Fleet-Footed Four-in-Hand on the Murman Coast. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

(Rhinoceros) Nepal to Supply Rhinoceros for American Museum. (Dec. 7, 1925.)

(Sheep) Tending Sheep Among the Lonely Columns of Carthage. (Nov. 30, 1925.)

(Walrus) The Head of a Bull Walrus Killed at Etah, Greenland. (Jan. 4, 1926.)

(Walrus) How Eskimos Hunt the Walrus. (Jan. 4, 1925.)

(III.) Senor Zopilote (Buzzard) in a Moment of Relaxation. (Feb. 8, 1926.)

(III.) Cleaning Fish in Quaint St. John's, Newfoundland. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

Birds: King Cod Gets Some Allies in Newfoundland. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

Fish: (III.) Avalon Harbor: Santa Catalina Island, California. (Mar. 30, 1925.)

Insects: (Ants) (III.) An Ant Hill in Central Africa. (Mar. 9, 1925.)

Fireflies, Crickets and a Japanese Legend. (Nov. 30, 1925.)

Marine Life: (III.) Pearl Blisters Artificially Produced. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

(III.) Nest of a Large Sea Turtle. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Pearls, the Tomb of Worms. (Mar. 16, 1925.)

(III.) Starfish and Crayfish Portrait in Clear Ocean Water. (Apr. 6, 1925.)

Mountains: (III.) Troop Transport in the Dolomite Alps. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Two Englishmen Scale Kilimanjaro, Highest African Peak. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

Natural Phenomena: (III.) Looking Through the Arch of the Largest Natural Bridge (Utah) in the World. (Feb. 15, 1926.)

Icebergs Are the Prize of a War of Sea Currents. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

(III.) Midnight Sailing Into the Home of the Icebergs. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Fashion in Colors for Oceans. (Apr. 6, 1925.)

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(III.) Midnight Sailing Into the Home of the Icebergs. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

(III.) Starfish and Crayfish Portrait in Clear Ocean Water. (Apr. 6, 1925.)

Plants and Trees: Bamboo: Grass That is Timber and Food. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

(III.) Bamboo Wares as They are Offered for Sale in Chinese Villages. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

(III.) A Eucalyptus Log from Tasmania. (May 4, 1925.)

Nottingham (England) Rises to Robin Hood's Defense. (May 11, 1925.)

(III.) Petrified Tree Stump in the Cork and Bottle Mine: Scranton, Pa. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

(III.) The Tevis Bamboo Grove of Bakersfield, California. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

(III.) Cacao, or Chocolate, Growing in Tabasco, Mexico. (Nov. 23, 1925.)

(III.) Giant Tortoise Promenades With His Evolutionary Grandson. (Apr. 13, 1925.)

Reptiles: The Amur: A Factor in Manchurian Crises. (Feb. 22, 1926.)

Rivers: (III.) Sea Washing Into the Main Street of Salomiki. (Nov. 16, 1925.)

Storms: Maine Approves Harnessing Bay of Fundy Tides. (Oct. 26, 1925.)

Tides: (III.) A Tidal Product (Seaweed). (Oct. 26, 1925.)

Tidal Wave Sweeps Yap, Island of Millstone Money. (Jan. 18, 1926.)

POPULAR SCIENCE

Acoustics: (III.) Sight-seers Testing the Peculiar Acoustic Properties of the "Whispering Gallery" of Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol. (Nov. 2, 1925.)

Aeronautics: Beacons for Ships of the Air. (Oct. 26, 1925.)

Cape Verde Islands: Invincible Airplane Station. (Nov. 30, 1925.)

(III.) Brought Nearest to the World by Seaplane. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

(III.) Gangplank of the Shenandoah: Showing the Duralumin Metal Framework. (Feb. 8, 1926.)

Irkutsk: Important Station on a New Air Route. (Apr. 20, 1925.)

Night Flying and Night Trains Fostered by Letter Writers. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

(Map). A Sketch Map of the Northern Hemisphere Showing Proposed Routes of Aircraft Over the Arctic Zone. (May 4, 1925.)

(III.) "Midnight Sun" of the Air Mail (Searchlight). (Oct. 26, 1925.)

(III.) The Omaha Flying Field at Night. (Mar. 1, 1926.)

(III.) A Pictorial Diagram of the Shenandoah. (Oct. 19, 1925.)

The Story of the Shenandoah. (Oct. 19, 1925.)

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Night Flying and Night Trains Fostered by Letter Writers

CONTRACT air mail routes connecting nearly all the large cities in the United States will start in swift succession this spring. These services will supplement the New York to San Francisco air mail operated by the Post Office Department since July 1, 1924.

The new routes represent the first important extensions of commercial aviation in the United States. The Post Office Department, therefore, receives credit for pioneering the way toward the everyday use of planes for trade purposes in this country. The government departments are so often regarded as producers only of red tape to shackle progress, that it is worth while to note that the Post Office Department has a considerable record for pioneering.

In the early days of the railway development, postal demands brought about night trains. When postal officials required that trains run after dark, trainmen were astounded that such a risky practice should be demanded. Now railroad traffic at night is almost as heavy as it is in daytime.

From Night Trains to Night Planes

A fitting sequel to this role in railroad progress came when the Post Office Department Air Mail Service in 1925 pioneered the first regular night plane service on the route between Chicago and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Later, night service was extended to include New York. Carrying forward the comparison we may expect that night airplane service of the future will be as common as Pullman car service is today.

In July, 1924, the Post Office Department began to carry mail over the entire route from coast to coast in planes. In preparation for this project eight intercoastal relay flights were made a year before. Letters bearing a San Francisco postmark of 6 a. m., August 24, were canceled at the New York Post Office at 2 p. m., the following day.

During these flights the great white airway along the night route from Chicago to Cheyenne was tested and night flying shown to be practicable. For this achievement the Air Mail Service was awarded the Collier Trophy for the second successive year.

A Lane of Light to the West

The electrical engineers provided five stations with aerial beacons aptly nicknamed "midnight suns of the Air Mail." Each beacon is a high-intensity arc searchlight, mounted on a 50-foot tower, and it revolves three times a minute.

Set at an angle of one degree, the 500,000,000 candlepower beam from each of these land lighthouses sweeps the sky just above the horizon. Pilots have sighted beacons 130 miles away on clear nights. At 100 miles the diameter of its beam is about two miles if weather conditions permit it being seen at all.

On 34 emergency landing fields along the night airway, large guiding lights have been installed. There are smaller light guides every three miles. A continuous light lane 1,900 miles long extends between New York and Cheyenne now.

